



## Microsoft Dynamics Customer Solution Case Study



### Overview

**Country or Region:** United States

**Industry:** Manufacturing—Automotive

### Customer Profile

The Bing Group is a diversified automotive-manufacturing company dedicated to providing superior products to customers and employment opportunities to improve its community's quality of life.

### Business Situation

The company needed a versatile way to manage production schedules, electronically exchange orders and shipments with customers, and provide financial information across divisions.

### Solution

With the help of two Microsoft® Gold Certified Partners, AIM Computer Solutions and The TM Group, The Bing Group deployed Microsoft Dynamics® GP and integrated it with AIM Vision software as its automotive-manufacturing solution.

### Benefits

- Facilitate strategic production planning
- Scale and maintain solution with ease
- Support company advancement



## Automotive Supplier Overcomes Industry Pitfalls with Reliable Manufacturing Platform

“Microsoft Dynamics GP enhances our industry position and helps us expand into new markets and actively pursue new opportunities.”

Thomas Lijana, Chief Financial Officer, The Bing Group

The Bing Group provides manufacturing services to original equipment manufacturers and tier-one suppliers in the automotive and office-furniture markets. The company used manufacturing software from CMS Software to manage the logistics, production, and finances of its stamping division, but found that the system was not designed to meet the specific needs of its stamping operations. Microsoft Dynamics® GP and AIM Computer Solutions AIM Vision manufacturing software replaced the old system, increasing supply-chain visibility and streamlining processes. This automated production-planning solution reduced premium-freight costs by 40 percent and inventory-carrying costs by 20 percent and improved delivery performance. The Bing Group proactively meets the stringent demands of the automotive industry and provides key metric data essential to making effective management decisions.



“We switched from the manufacturing software from CMS Software to Microsoft Dynamics GP and AIM Vision because Microsoft Dynamics GP fit our business model better and the implementation was straightforward.”

Thomas Lijana, Chief Financial Officer, The Bing Group

## Situation

The Bing Group is a diversified base of manufacturing companies that supply parts and products to customers in the automotive and office-furniture industries. Founded in 1980 by prominent entrepreneur, philanthropist, and former Detroit Pistons member Dave Bing, The Bing Group is a certified minority business dedicated to providing employment opportunities for area residents and improving the quality of life for the Detroit, Michigan, community.

As a supplier to major automotive manufacturers, The Bing Group is subject to strict industry standards for product quality, accuracy, and timeliness of delivery. These standards require the purchasing department to order parts on time to accommodate complicated production assembly schedules. Automotive suppliers, such as The Bing Group, must also provide an electronic advanced shipping notice (ASN) to customers, notifying them when a shipment is coming and what the shipment contains.

“If we don’t supply parts on time to our customers for the final assembly, there are serious penalties,” explains Thomas Lijana, Chief Financial Officer of The Bing Group. As a supplier, The Bing Group could be responsible for paying the customer’s production, labor, material, overhead costs, and even earnings on lost sales associated with the late shipment.

The Bing Group used JBA accounting software to manage the financials for its metals-assembly division, while its value-added stamping division used manufacturing software from CMS Software (now Solarsoft). The manufacturing software from CMS Software was difficult to use and having multiple systems across divisions was costly to maintain. “I wanted everybody on one software package,” says Lijana. “There are

some synergies that you gain—from an IT standpoint and a user standpoint—if all divisions operate on the same systems.”

The Bing Group needed a solution with a financial management tool compliant with Generally Acceptable Accounting Principles. It had to provide both automotive-specific manufacturing functionality and financial information that identified actual versus planned data on key operational metrics. In addition, the company sought the following operational benefits:

- Planning production schedules efficiently to improve supply-chain operations
- Aligning accounting with production and materials management to accurately place orders and estimate costs
- Building effective lines of communications with customers and suppliers for order and delivery exchange

## Solution

The Bing Group engaged long-time partner, Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner AIM Computer Solutions, and Microsoft Gold Certified Partner The TM Group to deploy Microsoft Dynamics® GP and AIM Vision to manage the supply-chain and financial operations of its value-added stamping division. Microsoft Dynamics GP offers enterprise resource planning capabilities, and AIM Vision performs repetitive automotive-manufacturing tasks and generates production scheduling based on electronic data interchange (EDI) transactions.

Jerry Czernel, Vice President of Operations at AIM Computer Solutions explains, “AIM Vision is designed exclusively for automotive suppliers like The Bing Group. We used our collective leadership to rapidly deliver and effectively meet the automotive-manufacturing needs of The Bing Group.”

The partners deployed Microsoft Dynamics GP and AIM Vision centrally, providing access

to more than 100 employees through a remote connection using Citrix with Terminal Services.

“We switched from the manufacturing software from CMS Software to Microsoft Dynamics GP and AIM Vision because Microsoft Dynamics GP fit our business model better and the implementation was straightforward,” says Lijana. In addition to using Microsoft Dynamics GP for its stamping division, The Bing Group uses it to manage business processes for a recently acquired nonautomotive business. The company also plans to switch its metals-assembly division from JBA software to Microsoft Dynamics GP so that all three operating entities will run off a single instance of Microsoft Dynamics GP.

#### **Production Scheduling**

To plan production schedules, plant employees manage incoming demand by using AIM Vision. Within the materials-management tool in AIM Vision, each part number is associated with a piece of machinery set up to perform repetitive tasks extended over several weeks. Operations managers can determine a machine's scheduled workload and make quick changes to accommodate the incoming demand. “If an inbound order that requires 10 hours of work comes through for a specific machine, AIM Vision tells us we've only got four hours available on that machine,” explains Lijana. “So, we know we'll have to work overtime or bring in another shift. AIM Vision provides forward-planning data so that we are no longer reacting.”

#### **Accounting Processes**

AIM Computer Solutions and The TM Group collaborated to create a financial model within Microsoft Dynamics GP that extracts data from the purchasing, materials-management, shipping, and receiving components in AIM Vision. For example, AIM Vision captures information on standard

costs through production posting, purchasing, inventory, and other general and administrative overhead data. Accountants access this information directly through the General Ledger in Microsoft Dynamics GP.

Likewise, when a shipping transaction is created in AIM Vision, it uses invoicing data stored in the item master to create both the invoice and ASN. AIM Vision then links the invoice and ASN to Microsoft Dynamics GP and posts them to the General Ledger.

“AIM Vision handles the raw data, and Microsoft Dynamics GP interprets the financial data to help management make decisions,” explains Lijana. Microsoft Dynamics GP plays a critical role in providing long-term financial history on accounts receivables, accounts payables, and manufacturing-based general ledger transactions, such as inventory evaluation, inventory variance, scrap values, and other cost and revenue figures. Lijana and his accounting team also export manufacturing and financial data from Microsoft Dynamics GP to Microsoft Office Excel® for additional financial analysis.

#### **Supply-Chain Management**

AIM Vision gives The Bing Group the ability to electronically communicate with both its customers and its suppliers using AIM Vision EDI. The product adjusts a raw-data import for automotive use—such as standard-pack rounding, transit-day adjustments, and production-pattern matching—before moving an order into the production schedule for capacity requirements and material-requirements processing. AIM Vision EDI also receives orders, sends ASNs to customers, and orders raw material and components from suppliers for The Bing Group.

#### **Benefits**

The financial interface of AIM Vision with Microsoft Dynamics GP gives The Bing Group

“AIM Vision handles the raw data, and Microsoft Dynamics GP interprets the financial data to help management make decisions.”

Thomas Lijana, Chief Financial Officer, The Bing Group

an all-encompassing solution not available with other automotive-manufacturing solutions. The integration increases the company’s visibility into the supply chain so that it can continue to manufacture and ship high-quality products that meet the rigorous demands of its customers.

#### **Facilitate Strategic Production Planning**

With Microsoft Dynamics GP and AIM Vision, The Bing Group efficiently manages its supply chain and curbs potential cost penalties. “Because we can see the rolling, 12-week demand of an inbound order, we can proactively schedule each plant to ensure that raw materials arrive on time for production and minimize overtime pay,” explains Lijana. The company has seen a 40 percent reduction in premium-freight costs and a 20 percent reduction in inventory-carrying costs due to its ability to plan strategically according to incoming demand. The Bing Group meets outbound-shipment deadlines while avoiding penalties associated with inefficient planning and late delivery to customers.

#### **Scale and Maintain Solution with Ease**

Various divisions of the company—the value-added stamping division, the metals-assembly division, and a recently acquired nonautomotive business—all benefit from centralizing information in Microsoft Dynamics GP. “Maintaining separate software packages isn’t a good way to operate a company,” explains Lijana. “It’s very costly to do an upgrade for one software package, and then do another upgrade independent of that.”

The Bing Group avoided the need to replace its existing AS400 hardware system by investing in a single, versatile solution that extends out to multiple business units. Microsoft Dynamics GP provides the flexibility required by each division with the benefit of only having to maintain one software system.

#### **Support Company Advancement**

Growth is a strategic imperative for Dave Bing, winner of the 2008 Detroit Area Council Distinguished Citizen Award. He aims to position The Bing Group as a company that creates jobs and gives back to the community. With Microsoft Dynamics GP, The Bing Group maintains its competitive advantage over other automotive suppliers to serve both its customers and community needs.

“Microsoft Dynamics GP enhances our industry position and helps us expand into new markets and actively pursue new opportunities,” says Lijana. “It enables us to enhance our core competencies, capitalize on our resources, and expand our business with minimal additional human resources.”

## For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to:

[www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)

For more information about The Bing Group products and services, call (313) 867-3700 or visit the Web site at:

[www.binggroup.com](http://www.binggroup.com)

For more information about AIM Computer Solutions products and services, call (586) 439-0300 or visit the Web site at:

[www.aimcom.com](http://www.aimcom.com)

For more information about The TM Group products and services, call (888) 482-2864 or visit the Web site at:

[www.tmgrouppinc.com](http://www.tmgrouppinc.com)

## Microsoft Dynamics

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of integrated, adaptable business management solutions that enables you and your people to make business decisions with greater confidence. Microsoft Dynamics works like familiar Microsoft software such as Microsoft Office, which means less of a learning curve for your people, so they can get up and running quickly and focus on what's most important. And because it is from Microsoft, it easily works with the systems that your company already has implemented. By automating and streamlining financial, customer relationship, and supply chain processes, Microsoft Dynamics brings together people, processes, and technologies, increasing the productivity and effectiveness of your business, and helping you drive business success.

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics, go to:

[www.microsoft.com/dynamics](http://www.microsoft.com/dynamics)

### Software and Services

- Microsoft Dynamics
  - Microsoft Dynamics GP 8.0
- Microsoft Office
  - Microsoft Office Excel 2003
- Technologies
  - Terminal Services

### Partners

- AIM Computer Solutions
- The TM Group